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Leftist campaign seeks to limit FBI, CIA roles

By Bill Gertz
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Warning against the "threat of fascism" in the United States, Old and New Left political activists met over the weekend to formulate plans for lobbying in favor of legislative curbs on FBI and CIA intelligence functions.

Representatives of the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation gathered for their annual national conference at the Capitol Hill office of the United Methodist Church, where speakers talked about civil rights, criminal justice and "control" of U.S. intelligence agencies.

The group was formed in 1960 as the National Committee to Abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee by activists who were targets of HUAC and later were targets of FBI intelligence investigations. HUAC was abolished in 1976.

Along with the American Civil Liberties Union, the committee five years ago initiated a \$16 million lawsuit against the FBI, charging that some of its domestic activities during the last three decades were unconstitutional.

One speaker said the group had obtained 132,000 documents from the FBI and that the case was expected to come to court sometime in 1987.

The meeting was open to organizational observers and "concerned citizens," but reporters were barred from quoting speakers by name. Among those listed on the program agenda were two staff members of the House Judiciary Committee, which oversees the FBI activities, ACLU lawyer and anti-intelligence community lobbyist Morton Halperin and Georgia State Senator Julian Bond.

Representatives of Women's Strike for Peace and a support group for illegal aliens

known as the Sanctuary Movement also participated in the meeting.

A congressional staff member told the gathering that Congress could not do anything if "you hear funny noises on the phone" or if "your mail has been opened."

"But if an FBI agent shows up at your door and leaves his card and says he wants to talk to you about Nicaragua, there's a lot we can do," the congressional aide said. The aide also suggested that the FBI might be investigating the protest movement against South Africa's policy of racial segregation.

An ACLU lawyer told the approximately 40 attendees that the FBI was using "foreign counterintelligence" guidelines to circumvent restrictions on domestic investigations of Americans.

He said the ACLU was "looking for a client" who had been the subject of an FBI foreign counterintelligence investigation so the organization could challenge the FBI use of foreign counterspy guidelines to conduct investigations. The client would have to be someone with involvement in "foreign politics," he said.

During a discussion on curbing the U.S. intelligence community, participants stated that the United States faces a "threat of fascism" as the result of Reagan administration guidelines for the intelligence community.

Another participant stated that "when the Reagan administration invades Central America," American blacks will suffer most since they will be used as "cannon fodder like in Vietnam."

Pamphlets distributed at the meeting Saturday said the group would consider reorienting their congressional lobbying efforts so "that NCARL's primary focus be directed to the protection of the First Amendment against attacks from the federal government's 'intelligence community'."